

Mr. Kent
Mr. Smith

3 December 1964 ILLEGIB

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Evaluation of the Defense Intelligence Agency

1. The relationship between ONI and DIA has been one of cooperation rather than competition. It was recognized at the outset that the new organization would have many problems, and the ONI staff was directed to give whatever assistance it could. For its part, DIA has generally responded to spot requests (for specific information, briefings, etc.) quickly and helpfully to facilitate coordination of draft estimates. Excellent relations have been established with key individuals in DIA's estimates shop, which have been useful in establishing lines of communication between the two offices, and new methods of operation have evolved. It must be acknowledged, however, that certain problems remain.

2. One of the new methods developed to cope with military intelligence problems on an ad hoc basis is the joint CIA/DIA working group. The performance of such groups to date has been uneven -- good on such subjects as Soviet ground forces divisions and tactical aviation; poor on ground force equipment. A particularly good example of the effective use of CIA/DIA working groups was in the development this year of the new USIB issuance, Intelligence Assumptions for Planning -- Soviet Military Forces through 1970. In our view, where these groups have succeeded, it has been due to the prodding of CIA rather than the result of any initiative from DIA. Nevertheless, the joint working group remains a useful device for the future.

3. DIA inherited substantial intelligence assets from the services, notably in the following areas: order-of-battle, industrial production, current intelligence, geographic intelligence, and photographic interpretation. However, DIA's capabilities remain spotty. They are especially poor in scientific and technical intelligence, primarily because Air Forces' FTD, Army's missile experts at Huntsville, and other assets in this field were kept by the services. Furthermore, DIA inherited some liabilities as well as assets, including individuals with parochial service views which sometimes are reflected in DIA's products.

4. DIA has done some very useful studies in the field of military intelligence, for example, a survey of geologic factors at Soviet missile sites. DIA's contributions to military estimates have been very uneven in quality. They have frequently failed to reflect new information, and in some cases they have not responded to important substantive questions raised in the terms of reference. Moreover, DIA's efforts to achieve a surface unity among the military have in some cases led DIA to incorporate views which would otherwise have been registered as service dissents. These efforts also result in suppressing differences which, if submitted as individual service views, would have been more fully explored.

5. We have also found the quality of DIA estimates officers uneven. Some DIA representatives have been very good, but most have lacked experience in the estimates field, and few have any depth or continuity in substantive intelligence. This is due in part to the quality of the estimators sent to DIA (the services tried to keep the good ones), and in part to the regular rotation of assignment which works against specialization. Another factor is the relatively high rank of the DIA representatives, who have experience as coordinators and supervisors rather than as substantive analysts. Some more experienced estimators are now coming to DIA in the course of rotation of assignment, but this improvement is probably only temporary.

6. We recognize that some of these problems result from growing pains, and that they will diminish with time. Furthermore, because DIA has acquired sizable intelligence components from the services, its product is a considerable improvement over that of the Joint Staff. But we cannot say at this time that it is any improvement over the individual products of the three services in the period prior to the establishment of DIA.


ONE/EE Staff

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